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CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

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HIGH-SPEED TRAIN SERVICE OFFERS BOOST TO SAN DIEGO

Economic Study Cites More Jobs, Less Cost than Alternatives

SAN DIEGO, CA – The High-speed Train System would help create more than 45,000 jobs in San Diego, increase safety and reduce congestion according to a new economic study by the San Diego Institute for Policy Research.

The Institute's just-completed San Diego Regional Economic Impact Study on the effects of high-speed trains on the region also finds it would be “two to three times less costly than expanding highways and airports to serve similar travel demands.”

Those findings and more illustrate the potential local impact of Proposition 1A on the November ballot, which would provide funding to start construction of a new transportation alternative for congestion-weary Californians.

“The obvious benefits of high-speed rail include lowered transportation costs, time savings compared to automobile trips, less congestion at Lindbergh Field, a community more attractive to businesses and safer highways resulting from fewer vehicle trips,” said Lynn Schenk, former congresswoman and San Diego representative on the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

“But when these benefits are bolstered by such dramatic economic gains for the region, high-speed rail makes even more sense.”

The Governor and Legislature provided funding in Proposition 1A to jump-start construction of the train line, which will eventually extend nearly 800 miles from San Diego, through Los Angeles to San Francisco and on to Sacramento.

The study concludes that the project could alleviate freeway and airport congestion, “giving California businesses enhanced opportunities to tap into more distant labor and customer markets, and enhancing mobility and improving the quality of life.”

“Our study shows that high-speed train service to San Diego has tremendous upside,” says the Institute's W. Erik Bruvold. “The choice is between a new transportation alternative with the capacity to move tens of millions of Californians versus build-out of our conventional highway and airport systems, which will be inadequate to meet the demand even in the San Diego region, which is projected to be home for a million more residents by the year 2030.”

The study finds that as the high-speed train diverts traffic from highways and airports, capacity increases will lead to reduced travel times for all travelers. High-speed rail “would lower demand for auto travel in San Diego by 9.1 percent... and also result in a 4.1 percent reduction in travel time along high-speed train corridors.” Fewer flights to and from California’s airports would decrease delays and congestion.

The study also looked at environmental impacts and notes that electrically propelled high-speed trains use one-fifth the energy of cars in traffic and one-third the energy of airplanes. The new system would reduce carbon dioxide emission that cause global warming by more than 12 billion pounds per year, the equivalent of removing a million vehicles from state roads. It also would reduce oil consumption by some 12 million barrels per year.

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